

no longer here to vindicate themselves—might it not be well for you to fasten an eye upon it? Would it be wholly out of place, or perhaps I had better say, would it be in bad taste for you to direct formally to it the special attention of the accomplished and scholarly ex-Senator Ingalls? For it was, undoubtedly, during this long succession of years that the ancestry of the large mass of negro slaves, afterward upon our soil, were landed upon American shores. I am not at all bold when I say that, during the whole of that epoch, not one slave ship owned by a citizen of a Southern State, or operated from a Southern State, traversed the Atlantic ocean! After independence had been achieved, British custom houses yielding to American, the work of inquiry was facilitated. In fact, I myself, had a statement, taken from the Charleston custom house records, of the number and ownership of vessels engaged in the slave trade which entered that port during the years 1806 and 1807. It was sent to me on a newspaper clipping by a friend some few years ago. I was so unfortunate as to lose or mislay it. When commencing to prepare for this occasion, I wrote requesting him to furnish me with the name and date of the paper from which the clipping had been taken. This he could not do; differing from me in opinion as to the newspaper. I thought then, and still think, it was the *Atlanta Constitution*. We are in full accord, however, as to its substance. I read from his letter: “At any rate it was substantially this; an extract from the records of the custom house at Charleston showing the number of slave ships that arrived and discharged their cargoes there in 1806 and 1807, the last two years in which the slave traders were openly entered in the custom house, and giving the States of the United States and foreign countries in which they were assured, and to which they belonged.